

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, APRIL 13th, 2025**

Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God
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*Palm & Passion Sunday
Preparing for the Final Encounter at the Cross*

OFFERING PRAYER

"Lord Jesus, we offer our gifts today with grateful hearts, remembering that You, the King of peace, came to serve, not to be served. Use these gifts to bring peace and healing to the world. In Your name, we pray.
Amen."

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sing verse 1 of #123 "Hosanna! Loud Hosanna!"

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the happy children sang;
through pillared court and temple, the joyful anthem rang;
to Jesus, who had blessed them, close folded to his breast,
the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

L: Look! He is coming! The King of all creation is riding into Jerusalem!

P: He is seated on a donkey's back! He does not look like royalty.

L: Yet the crowds cheer and wave branches from the palm trees.

P: Is he riding into a royal welcome or to condemnation?

Sing verse 2 of "Hosanna! Loud Hosanna!"

From Olivet they followed, 'mid an exultant crowd,
the victory palm branch waving, and singing clear and loud;
the Lord of earth and heaven, rode on in lowly state,
content that little children, should on his bidding wait.

L: Let us join the celebration and raise our voices to welcome the Lord of Life!

P: Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Leader: Hosanna Savior, we wave our palms and sing our praise as we remember your triumphal entry into Jerusalem. May your Spirit enter the heart of our worship this day giving us the strength to endure the journey ahead.

Sing verse 3 of "Hosanna! Loud Hosanna!"

'Hosanna in the highest!' That ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer; earth, let your anthems ring.
O may we ever praise him, with heart and life and voice,
and in his humble presence, eternally rejoice!

OPENING PRAYER

On this day of changes, of confusion, of uncertainty
do not abandon us, O God, even when we abandon you.
Give us the courage in this time of worship
to face the truth of our stories,
and the wondrous power of your presence, and forgiveness
in even the most trying of times. Amen.

ANTHEM

WELCOMING & RECOGNITION

Welcoming of new members and recognition of those who are and continue to be part of the Hagersville united church congregation

CHORUS OF RESPONSE: # 958 "Halle, Halle, Halle"

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halleujah! Hallelujah!

CHILDREN'S TIME & CHILDREN'S VIDEO

SHARED LITANY: "The Journey"

Reader 1: If anyone questioned them, they were simply to say, "The Lord needs them"—and the animals would be released without hesitation.

Reader 2: The crowds that went ahead of him, and those that followed were shouting:

Congregation: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Reader 1: And now, the invitation was clear: come, and witness what unfolds next.

(With quiet resolve, Jesus stepped away from the gathered crowd ...)

Reader 2: All these were mingled together with the aromas of incense and sacrifice--smoke billowing toward heaven - toward God.

Congregation: Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! Behold, the king comes. He comes riding on a donkey. Surely this is the son of God. Hosanna in the highest!

HYMN: #127 Ride On! Ride on in Majesty!

1 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

Hark! all the tribes hosanna cry;
O Saviour meek, pursues thy road
with palms and scattered garments strowed.

2 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die;
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered sin.

3 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

The winged squadrons of the sky
look down with sad and wondering eyes
to see the approaching sacrifice.

4 Ride on! Ride on in majesty!

In lowly pomp ride on to die;
bow thy meek head to mortal pain,
then take, O God, thy power, and reign.

OUR STORY CONTINUES AS WE MEET JESUS IN THE UPPER ROOM.

Reader: Luke 22:14-23

¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

¹⁷ After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. ¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.^[a] ²¹ But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. ²² The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!" ²³ They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

HYMN: #480 Let us Break Bread Together Vs. 1.

1 Let us break bread together on our knees,
let us break bread together on our knees.

When I fall down on my knees
with my face to the rising sun,
Oh, Lord, have mercy on me.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Word was spreading... people were talking... Jesus drew his friends close to him.

The disciples talked and ate. They were spending time together and sharing the Passover meal together as friends do.

Then Jesus stood up and... The room became quiet....

Full of love he took a loaf of bread, broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Full of love, he took a cup of wine as he said,

"This cup is poured out for you showing you a new way and God's promise in me."

Full of awe and wonder the friends ate the bread and shared the cup.

They had been fed with stories and prayers, words and deeds, and now this most special bread and wine.

Word was spreading

And now we are to be feed with this wine and this bread on this Palm Sunday as we remember what followed that night as Jesus share this meal with his friends.

Come share this meal, as we enter this Holy Week, we move with Jesus into the last days of his ministry. We prepare for the ultimate sacrifice of love.

Come to the table, you are invited by Jesus....

COMMUNION IS SHARED

POST COMMUNION PRAYER - SHARED

Leader: WE have shared this meal with you lord, a meal that reflects the last supper you shared with your disciples. Now we are finished and the time has come. To enter a week that is hard to understand at times.

People: God, hold us, as we walk too, through, on, into this world's darkness. (Pause.)

Leader: God of passion, we kneel with you, praying, into the night, while the world conspires against you, and tries to put an end to love. (Pause.)

People: God, kneel with us, as we pray too, into this night, as forces gather behind our words, and betray love's future. (Pause.)

Leader: God of the day and night, who lives through it, we follow, holding your cup, trusting your will, though the shadows seems so long. (Pause.)

All: God, who lives through us, follow on, help us hold your cup, and keep trusting, Jesus, through the deep night. ((Leader will continue the prayer and followed by Lord's Prayer)

MEDITATION: THE BETRAYAL

The room is silent. The table is left:

broken bread still sitting there, wine half finished,
herbs and lamb scattered across the table.

In the distance you can hear footsteps moving through the garden

Whose they are we do not know.

The room hangs, suspended in time, cushions scattered, crumbs across the floor, a basin and a towel sit by the door.

There is a rustle of leaves among the trees,
a brushing of garments caught on branches,
the sound of knees breaking twigs as they kneel.

The room is cold, full of questions. The air is deep with the smell of betrayal and panic, of accusations and unfinished stories.

But something deeper is gone, and gone forever:
a presence, a hope.

Heavy footsteps sound on their way past the house out of the city.
The room is dull. Shadows stretch across unfinished bread and half-drunk wine, a breeze from the empty window fills the space,
and crumbs roll and tablecloth flutters, as the wind moves around the emptiness of the room; a ghostly presence, filling the space,
a haunting love.

There is a gathering of noise, shouts, and silence.

From the room can be heard distant muttering.

The trees capture the sounds and clasp the moment of betrayal.

Suddenly, all at once, the wind changes direction,
the silence breaks, and a kiss is traced on a carpenter's cheek.
It is the moment of betrayal. The night has truly arrived.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 22: 47-54

Jesus Arrested

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸ but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

⁴⁹ When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

⁵¹ But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that

you have come with swords and clubs? ⁵³ Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns.”

Peter Disowns Jesus

⁵⁴ Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.

THE CHRIST CANDLE IS EXTINGUISHED

HYMN: # 135 Beneath the Cross of Jesus Vs. 1

1 Beneath the cross of Jesus
 I fain would take my stand:
 the shadow of a mighty rock
 within a weary land,
 a home within the wilderness,
 a rest upon the way,
 from the burning of the noontide heat
 and the burden of the day.

SENDING FORTH

Leader: This worship does not end with words of benediction,
 for this worship service does not end.

**People: As people of faith we know that the story does not end –
 cannot end – with death.**

Leader: And so we depart with the story unfinished,
 to contemplate, to wonder, and to wait.

**People: We return during the week to continue our waiting and our
 wondering and, ultimately, to rejoice in the story of resurrection.**

Leader: Go forth in the name of Christ, carrying the hosannas in your
 heart but walking the way of the cross. May you know His love, His
 sacrifice, and the hope of resurrection. Amen.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

Announcements

Tuesday, April 15th: Coffee Tuesday at Springvale beginning at
 9:30am. All are welcome!

Friday, April 18th: Good Friday Joint Service at Hagersville beginning
 at 10:30am. Join us after worship in the C.E. Wing for fellowship & hot
 cross buns.

Sunday, April 20th: Easter Sunday. Springvale will host their Easter
 Breakfast beginning at 8:30am with worship to follow.

**Please bring in paper products for the Hagersville
 Food Bank! ☺**

Welcoming New Members & Honouring Our Church Family

Today we celebrate those joining the Hagersville United
 Church community—your presence brings fresh energy
 and new gifts to our shared journey of faith. We also give
 thanks for all who have been and continue to be part of
 this congregation. Your faithfulness, love, and support are
 the heart of who we are. Together—new and long-
 standing—we are one body in Christ, called to be light in
 the world. Thanks be to God for each of you.

GOD FINDS OUT ABOUT LAWN CARE

"Winterize your lawn," the big sign outside the garden store commanded. I've fed it, watered it, mowed it, raked it and watched a lot of it die anyway. Now I'm supposed to winterize it? I hope it's too late. Grass lawns have to be the stupidest thing we've come up with outside of thong swimsuits! We constantly battle dandelions, Queen Anne's lace, thistle, violets, chicory and clover that thrive naturally, so we can grow grass that must be nursed through an annual four step chemical dependency.

Imagine the conversation The Creator might have with St. Francis about this:

"Frank you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracted butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles."

"It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great extent to kill them and replace them with grass."

"Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?"

"Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn."

"The spring rains and cool weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy."

"Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it _ sometimes twice a week."

"They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?"

"Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags."

"They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?"

"No, sir. Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away."

"Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?"

"Yes, sir."

"These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work."

"You aren't going believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it."

"What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life."

"You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and have them hauled away."

"No! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and keep the soil moist and loose?"

"After throwing away your leaves, they go out and buy something they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves."

"And where do they get this mulch?"

"They cut down trees and grind them up."

"Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. Saint Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?"

"Dumb and Dumber, Lord. It's a real stupid movie about..."

"Never mind I think I just heard the whole story."